



WEBCOR PRESENTS OPERA AT THE BALLPARK

FREE LIVE SIMULCASTS OF *TOSCA* AND *IL TROVATORE* TO HIGHLIGHT SUMMER AND FALL SEASONS

SAN FRANCISCO, January 26, 2009 – San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Giants will partner with Webcor Builders to bring grand opera to AT&T Park, home of the San Francisco Giants baseball team. The opening week of the Company’s Summer season features a free live simulcast of Giacomo Puccini’s *Tosca*, starring Canadian soprano Adrienne Pieczonka in the title role, on Friday, June 5, 2009 at 8 p.m. *Webcor Presents Opera at the Ballpark* continues on Saturday, September 19, 2009 at 8 p.m. with a simulcast of Giuseppe Verdi’s *Il Trovatore* starring Marco Berti in the title role and conducted by Music Director Nicola Luisotti. Over 23,000 music lovers enjoyed the Company’s most recent simulcast of *Lucia di Lammermoor* in June 2008, and large crowds are once again expected to turn out and experience glorious music in one of San Francisco’s most beautiful locations.

Through state-of-the-art technology made possible by the Koret-Taube Media Suite, these simulcasts will be transmitted in 1920x1080 high definition (HD) to AT&T Park’s 103-foot wide Mitsubishi Electric Diamond Vision scoreboard—one of the highest quality outdoor scoreboards in the nation—live from the stage of the War Memorial Opera House. Concert quality audio combined with AT&T Park’s huge screen will create an unmatched operatic experience for attendees sitting in the stands and on the baseball field. Traditional baseball game concessions will be available, providing audiences the rare opportunity to eat hot dogs, peanuts and popcorn while listening to glorious opera.

“We are thrilled to partner once again with our friends at the San Francisco Giants to bring grand opera back to AT&T Park this year,” said San Francisco Opera General Director David Gockley. “*Webcor Presents Opera at the Ballpark* is a truly unique opportunity for fans to enjoy the sights and sounds of San Francisco Opera in one of the nation’s premiere ballparks. We are extremely pleased to continue giving this free event as a gift to the community.”

“Once again, the visionary leadership of David Gockley and our partnership with the Giants are allowing us to present *Webcor Presents Opera at the Ballpark* in 2009,” said Opera Board Chairman John Gunn. “David’s commitment to bringing this great art form into the community, the amazing capabilities of the Koret-Taube Media Suite, and the financial generosity of our friends at Webcor are part of what makes this great event possible. We are just scratching the surface of the potential of electronic media to reach and cultivate new audiences for opera, and we look forward to building on our past successful simulcasts.”

Always an audience favorite, Puccini’s *Tosca* brings to life a tempestuous world of cruelty and deception through the tale of an idealistic artist, a celebrated singer and a corrupt police chief engaged in a fierce battle of wills. Canadian soprano Adrienne Pieczonka makes her Company debut in the title role opposite Roberto Aronica as Cavaradossi and Lado Ataneli as the evil Scarpia. Italian conductor Marco Armiliato returns to conduct and former Adler Fellow Jose Maria Condemi directs.

In his first production as the Company’s Music Director, Nicola Luisotti conducts Verdi’s *Il Trovatore*, a suspenseful story of a corrupt count, a dashing warrior and a Gypsy who plots to avenge her mother’s wrongful death. Italian tenor Marco Berti sings the title role alongside a star-studded cast that includes Dmitri Hvorostovsky as Count di Luna, Sondra Radvanovsky in her San Francisco Opera debut as the lovely Leonora and Stephanie Blythe as Azucena. David McVicar’s striking new production is directed by Walter Sutcliffe.

Webcor Builders, builders of AT&T Park, has partnered with San Francisco Opera as the Presenting Sponsor of the next three Opera at the Ballpark simulcasts. “As a longtime supporter of San Francisco Opera, Webcor is excited to share the beauty and enchantment of opera with

the community at the unique venue of AT&T Park,” said Andrew Ball, President and CEO of Webcor Builders.

Free live simulcasts have been among the first innovations of David Gockley’s tenure as general director and part of the Company’s campaign to bring opera into the community and to wider audiences. San Francisco Opera has presented five free live simulcasts: Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* at AT&T Park to a crowd of 23,000 on June 20, 2008; Saint-Saëns’s *Samson and Delilah*, also at AT&T Park on September 28, 2007 to an audience of nearly 15,000; a June 22, 2007 simulcast of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* to capacity crowds at four venues (San Francisco’s Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Cal Performances at UC Berkeley, Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at UC Davis, and the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts in Santa Rosa); Verdi’s *Rigoletto* on October 6, 2006 presented to an audience of approximately 14,000 at Civic Center Plaza and Frost Amphitheatre at Stanford University; and the first, a simulcast of Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* on May 27, 2006, drawing 8,000 people to San Francisco’s Civic Center Plaza.

Ticket Information

These events are free and open to the public, however advance online registration assures early entrance into the ballpark for preferred seating and entry into a special prize drawing. Online registration for the June 5 *Tosca* simulcast begins April 6, 2009 at *sfopera.com*. AT&T Park is located at 24 Willie Mays Plaza in San Francisco. For further information, visit *sfopera.com*.

San Francisco Opera simulcasts are made possible through the extraordinary technology of the Company’s Koret-Taube Media Suite, the only permanent HD broadcast-standard video production facility installed in an American opera house. A grant from the Koret Foundation provided lead funding for the Koret-Taube Media Suite, with additional support provided by Tad and Dianne Taube. San Francisco Opera is able to offer *Webcor Presents Opera at the Ballpark* as a free community event through the generosity of many sponsors. Additional support provided by Platinum Sponsor Charles Schwab and Gold Sponsor Chevron. Company Sponsor Mrs. Edmund W. Littlefield is proud to support this production of *Tosca*, which is made possible, in

part, by Elizabeth and Burgess Jamieson, Tad and Dianne Taube and Koret Foundation. Opening Weekend Grand Sponsor Diane B. Wilsey is proud to support *Il Trovatore*. Equipment for these simulcasts is made possible through partnerships with Sony, Meyer Sound and Dolby Laboratories. CBS 5, the CW Bay Area, Classical 102.1 KDFC, and ClearChannel Outdoor join with San Francisco Opera as media partners for the Company's 2009–10 Season Community Events. San Francisco Opera is supported by Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

– SFO –

For further press information or to obtain 2009–10 Season announcement–related photographs, please visit sfopera.com/press or contact:

Julia Inouye 415.565.6430 / jinouye@sfopera.com

Robin Freeman 415.565.6451 / rffreeman@sfopera.com

National Press Representation:

Shuman Associates 212.315.1300 / shumanpr@shumanassociates.net